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BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
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existence of such a law; and in the chapter in which it is found it is merged with "Library Associations" under the same series of sections, and the same running caption to the pages; the broad distinctive idea of town free libraries does not appear to have been before the mind of the person making the index. The town libraries of Syracuse, Newburgh, Poughkeepsie, etc., are operated by these towns under a provision of the school law of 1847, by the boards of education; and we are not aware of a single library being maintained under the law of 1872. The law of Texas has as yet accomplished little, from the lack of a local population to claim its advantages; while local public opinion has been so effective in Massachusetts as to secure public libraries in more than a third of the 346 towns in the state since 1851.

There is great difference of opinion as to what are essential provisions in a town libraries' law. This is shown in the differences among the states in the length of the laws enacted. The law of Iowa, Rhode Island, and Texas is in a single short section; in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York, the law is embraced in two sections; in New Hampshire and Vermont, it is in four sections; in three of the states,—Colorado, Ohio and Wisconsin,—it is in seven, eight, and nine respectively; Nebraska and Michigan devote eleven sections to it, while Illinois requires twelve sections. The last section of each law—of its immediately taking effect—we have not intended to count in any case.

The origin and nature of these variations in length become apparent when we trace the laws for these libraries chronologically. The law of New Hampshire, as the first, was evidently made use of in framing that of Massachusetts, of 1851. The latter derived from it the rather peculiar provision for the receipt of gifts, donations and bequests, which, however, had previously been engrafted upon the general laws for the incorporation of library associations. Indeed, this provision for bequests has been adopted by a majority of the states that have enacted a public libraries' law (Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Wisconsin). After the passage of the Massachusetts law of 1851, Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, New York, Texas and Vermont conform the language of their statutes to it, and to the principle, at first, of restricting taxation by towns to a definite sum annually, while they are all left to devise such local management as each town may deem suitable. But in 1872 Illinois struck out a new course, and passed a law, with minute details for organization, government, and management, in twelve sections. Ohio followed with two laws, one for cities and another for towns, in nine sections each. The law of Illinois has been the basis of more library legislation in the Western states than any other law. Its longest section is the one relating to bequests. In framing the last but one of the state laws,—the law of Michigan,—that of Illinois was chiefly followed, except in the 12th section of the latter, which refers to the losses of books by the great fire in Chicago.

In conclusion: The facts upon which we have dwelt show that the introduction of public libraries is one of the prominent movements of the period. It is well that it is so. The annual increase of printing is incredibly enormous; inventions of cheap paper stock and machinery are continually aiding this increase. Common schools are supplying undeveloped readers by millions in a perpetual stream. Well-chosen libraries, administered with generous sympathies, are for these readers a great necessity and a great boon. Must the multiplication of them be left solely to the spontaneous action of solitary individuals?

CATALOGUES OF TOWN LIBRARIES.

BY JAMES L. WHITNEY, BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.*

CARLYLE stated before the Parliamentary Commission on the British Museum that a printed catalogue is a prime necessity to a large library, and that without it such an institution is the most strange conceivable object.† On the other hand, the opinion of Dr. Pertz, the Royal Librarian at Berlin, was quoted to the effect that written catalogues are sufficient, and that the only use of a printed one would be to throw away an immense sum of money.‡

This question, which thirty years ago arrayed Carlyle, De Morgan, and Edward Edwards in opposition to Panizzi and Hallam has again been brought forward for discussion. However it may be decided in the case of libraries of the character of the British Museum, there is no doubt that a printed catalogue is of the first importance to a town library, and that there are few questions in library economy which require more careful attention than this: How to prepare a good catalogue in the shortest time and in the most economical manner.

It is the object of this paper to make a few practical suggestions to this end. These suggestions will be in large part upon subjects not touched upon by Mr. Jewett or Mr. Cutter, or if included in their Rules deserving of further mention, and they are applicable to town libraries which are not likely to assume the proportions of our largest institutions, whose collections must be catalogued with greater elaborateness and precision. In some cases it has been found necessary to cut loose from old traditions, as certain established rules, whose value even in the catalogues of large libraries may be questioned, are clearly not the best for smaller catalogues.

In the preparation of this essay, fifty recently printed catalogues of town libraries have been examined. While some have been carefully and economically compiled, there are many where there is proof of haste, or waste, or misdirected effort. To cite a few examples: In the first catalogue taken in hand independent shelf-numbers and entries are given to every volume of a series, so that *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* occupies two pages, *Littell's Living Age* three pages, Milman's "Latin Christianity," with its cross-references, one-half a page, while Payne's "Universal Geography," published in 1798, and in a town library of little value, is entered three times in four lines each. In these cases no list of contents is given, but simply a repetition of the same words, and duplicates are entered again with the same fullness. A list of pseudonyms is appended, many of which have appeared twice in their alphabetical place and the others do not need mention, as the catalogue contains nothing written by the authors. In these, and in other ways, the catalogue is extended from its proper size of three hundred pages to four hundred and forty.

In the next catalogue examined independent shelf numbers and entries are given, as in the preceding case, to every volume, and even to every pamphlet in a series of annual reports of corporations. The accessions-numbers are printed, both

* It is proposed in a later number of the LIBRARY JOURNAL to give specimen pages of a catalogue suitable for town libraries.

† Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the constitution and government of the British Museum; with minutes of evidence. London, 1850, p. 273.

‡ Ibid., p. 442.

under the author, and also under the subjects, which are repeated in every conceivable form. "The independent liquorist," for example, appears under the author, the title, Liquor, and Domestic economy; a banjo instructor under the author, banjo, instructor, Music, and Education, the accessions-numbers of five figures each being printed nine times in the two. On some pages the extra lines required to print these accessions-numbers fill one-fourth of the space, and the catalogue might be made probably fifty pages shorter by their omission. Apart from this they are objectionable because they are likely to be mistaken for shelf-numbers. The laws of the United States are found under Laws and repeated under the United States and Congressional Documents, these documents with the repeated accessions-numbers occupying some twenty-five pages in double column. And here it is well to caution librarians against attempting, as is sometimes done, to analyze these documents, as involving an expenditure of money which can be better used in other ways. They have been indexed very minutely by the Boston Public Library, and when the work supplementing this, undertaken by the Library of Congress, is finished, these two will form a complete index which can be used in other libraries.

On the examination of a third catalogue of some twenty thousand volumes, it was no surprise to learn that it had been prepared in forty days, for since the Deluge, forty days and forty nights have not accomplished the like. The disappointment experienced at finding only three mistakes in the first three titles disappeared when twenty-one were seen in five consecutive lines, causing one to question the dictum of Carlyle that the worst catalogue that was ever drawn up by the hand of man is greatly preferable to no catalogue at all* As no pent up Utica can contract the powers of the person who threw this work together, and as he has announced his readiness to undertake other catalogues at the rates of 75,000 volumes a month, it is clearly our duty to enter a protest. Certainly, with this πού στῶ at hand, the possibility of a Universal Catalogue needs no discussion.

It is evident from these examples, which are by no means without parallel, that the question how to make the catalogue of a town library give the most information within the least space and at the smallest expense, is worthy of our attention. In these days of retrenchment, when public libraries are looked upon with distrust by many taxpayers as being an expensive luxury, every effort towards making catalogues compact, simple and economical should be encouraged. And it is to be remembered that with the growth of libraries catalogues must often be supplemented or reprinted, and that those institutions which have spent, as the first two mentioned have done, three thousand dollars, where two thousand would have sufficed, may find it difficult to obtain money to repeat such costly experiments. It will be wise for the librarian before deciding upon any plan to examine other catalogues, in order to copy their good features. Such might be seen at any large public library, or at the rooms of the American Library Association. They could be purchased for a small sum, or obtained by exchange.

FORM.—What shall be the form of the catalogue? It was a surprise to find that thirty-five of the fifty catalogues examined were printed in a single column. That this is not the most economical form can be proved by the following estimates recently received from printers:

1. A catalogue of four hundred pages, in single column, where the initials only of authors' Christian names are given, and the imprints omitted, will cost about $1200

* Report of Commissioners on the British Museum, p. 275.

for five hundred copies, and $1,400 for one thousand. The same matter in double column, the page being enlarged, will occupy about two hundred and twenty pages, and cost $800 for five hundred copies, and $950 for one thousand,—a saving of $450.

2. When imprints are given the saving would be somewhat less. *

An examination of a catalogue in single column shows from one-fourth to one-half of the page a blank space, occupied only with dots or leaders; and when it is remembered that all such filling is known as "printers' fat," and costs as much to a library, although not to the printer, as solid print, the waste is at once apparent. †

If the single column is used, let the catalogue be reduced from an octavo to a duodecimo, and the page narrowed by a centimeter or more, and there will be a considerable saving, and the catalogue will be more agreeable to the eye and convenient to the hand. If the double column is used let the size be a large octavo, or a small quarto.

ARRANGEMENT.—While preferring the Dictionary system, it is not proposed to discuss here the relative merits of that and of classed systems. Attention should be called to the fact that some of the best specimens of printed classed catalogues of public libraries—Professor Abbot's, of the Cambridge High School; those of the Saint Louis Public School Library, as explained by Mr. William T. Harris; of the New York Mercantile Library, by Mr. Perkins; and of the Apprentices' Library, of New York, by Mr. Schwartz—have appended partial, but only partial, alphabetical lists. The last named, however, has indexes arranged by authors, titles and subjects, so that the objections to the classed system are removed. In other classed catalogues, however, there are no indexes, and there can be no doubt that they are very much inferior to alphabetical catalogues. Few librarians have a sufficient knowledge of books to arrange them wisely under any scheme of classification, and however skillfully the work may be done, it will be sure to baffle the reader. A recently printed catalogue of a city library is arranged under classes, and some of these classes have been catalogued only by subjects, others only by authors, and others still only by titles or catch-word references. Unless the reader should chance to agree with the compiler in regarding Guyot's "Earth and Man," and the Cobden Club Essays, as works on the belles-lettres, or Reid's "Intellectual powers," and De Foe's "System of magic" as theology, he might seek for them in vain. In other classed catalogues the Pyramids are entered only under Fossilism and Paleontology, the Book of Psalms in short-hand, under Science, division Commercial Arts, and subdivision Inter-communication, and Cats and Dogs are found where, as in real life, they will be likely to make the most trouble, under Agriculture and Gardening.

Having settled upon the plan of the catalogue, before entering upon its preparation, make a rough list of the books, beginning with fiction, which should be placed nearest to the delivery desk, and let it be posted on the wall to serve as a temporary catalogue until the printed list is finished. The fiction can be entered only under titles, and other works by the authors only, either in one alphabet, or divided into a few classes, such as History, Travels, Science, and Miscellaneous.

AUTHORS.—In some catalogues the full Christian names of authors are given; in others, only the initials, and in others still,

* These estimates are not close, but approximate, and they are made from an examination of three different catalogues.

† A recent novel is described on the title-page as "a romance of dots and dashes." The hero is without doubt a compiler of single column catalogues.

only the surnames appear. The first is unnecessarily minute for an ordinary catalogue, and the last is altogether too bald. The headings Smith, Brown, Jones, and Robinson convey no ideas as to the authors. If the initials only are given, the sex of the author is not disclosed, and the title is far less suggestive than if the first Christian name be given in full. This, it will be found, will not lengthen the catalogue appreciably. If all the Christian names are generally used in speaking of an author, as Walter Savage Landor, all might to advantage be given.

British noblemen, as well as those of other nations, should be entered under their titles. It is here that we naturally look for them, and the reasons that are given for the use of the family name will rarely apply in small catalogues. The family name can follow in parentheses. It is to be understood that there are exceptions to this rule.

Pseudonymous books should appear under the pseudonym when it is in general use, and when the author prefers to be known by the disguising name. If Fernan Caballero, having survived three husbands, assumed again her maiden name, it is hardly worth the while to discuss which name shall be chosen, but to take the assumed name found on title-pages, and the one by which she is universally known. So it is with Paul Marcoy, John Latouche, Joaquin Miller, and many others. The real name can be added in parentheses, and if it is thought best, a heading-reference made to the pseudonym. This rule also cannot be followed indiscriminately.* The pseudonym is often found under two forms of the name when one is sufficient. This rule can be followed: if the last name of the pseudonym is a surname, as in George Eliot, give the last name, or, if preferred, both. If it is not a surname, as Oliver Optic, enter it only under the first name. If the initials only of an author appear, let the entry be under the first word of the title of the book. This will save one entry, and will generally be found to be sufficient.

In some catalogues the author's name does not appear unless he has written more than one book whose title is given in the catalogue, or, from the authors of single works a selection is made, which is purely arbitrary, as in one instance where a place is given to Dio Lewis which is denied to Roget and the Duke of Argyll. This is clearly unwise.

In repetitions it is well to avoid the use of dashes. The same purpose is served with less waste and offense to the eye by indenting the lines. There are pages in some catalogues where one-eighth of the space is occupied with dashes, each a centimeter in length, giving the titles the appearance of being on sluices.† The use of the word *See* in references should be avoided as much as possible, the author's name directly following the title being more natural.

From time immemorial catalogues have arranged the names of authors in an inverted order, so that they appear as if marching backwards in serried files, or as "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders." In references, where only one author is given, the names are better arranged in their natural order. In the general alphabetical arrangement of the catalogue, and where several authors are found under a subject, of course the eye catches the name quicker if the surname is given first.

TITLES.— Care should be taken in the transcription of titles that they be condensed within the smallest limits consistent with a proper description of the book.

* The reasons are stated in Mr. Cutter's "Rules for a Printed Dictionary Catalogue," p. 18.

† In the Barton Catalogue of the Boston Public Library, now in course of publication, dashes and leaders are not used.

Abbreviations can be used, selected from the list prepared by the American Library Association. When only two or three letters are to be saved by abbreviation, it is better to give the word in full, as Boston, Berlin, Lisbon, and not Bost., Berl., Lisb., unless a line can be saved in printing. In several catalogues the word Philadelphia can be seen repeated in full from thirty to thirty-six times in as many successive lines, occupying one-sixth of the page, when a contracted form and a single entry would have sufficed. Occasionally a catalogue is found which goes to the other extreme, and represents a Commentary on the Epistles by Com. of Eps., of the Cyclopædia of commercial and business anecdotes by Cyclop. com. bus. anec.,—a Cyclops "*cui lumen ademptum.*" *

SUBJECT.— Let the subject be entered under its most specific head, and give cross-references from all including subjects. This, which is the essential characteristic of the Dictionary system, has been generally forgotten, the tendency being to leave subjects isolated, or to place them only under some more general heading. It is only in proportion to the thoroughness with which cross-references are made from general subjects to their subordinate subjects, and also to their coördinate and illustrative subjects, that a catalogue will be useful. It must be remembered that no subject stands by itself, but is linked with many others. The catalogue of a limited collection of books has this advantage, that a double entry can often be made where in the larger work it is necessary to make a selection from two equally good headings, as for instance, in a work on Agriculture in China, which can be entered both under Agriculture and China.

IMPRINT.— The place, date and size are given in a larger part of the catalogues examined, in some they are not found, and in a few they are given only under the author. If the library has a record of its books in its accessions-catalogue, shelf-list or card-catalogue, the place and size are not needed in the printed catalogue, unless the book is old or rare. The date can be omitted in Juvenile books and Fiction. It is of no advantage to know that the thirty or forty volumes of Mrs. Southworth in the library bear the date 1870, and to give the date 1879 to a copy of "Jane Eyre" or the "Vicar of Wakefield," or to any of the innumerable books which, like the date palm, shed their dates from year to year, will only mislead the ignorant. In histories and works of travel and science, the date when the book was written or first issued, is more important than that of the publication of the particular copy in the library. This should appear both under the author and the subject. It is a defect in the printed Bates Hall catalogues of the Boston Public Library that no dates are given under the subject, so that readers, who rarely think to turn back to the author entry, sometimes call for scientific books which have long gone by, or for histories which do not cover the period of their studies. Under Geography, to leave without dates, as is often done, Strabo, Jedidiah Morse and Guyot, or under Greece, Anacharsis the Younger and Leake, or to give the date of some recent edition of the earlier works, would mislead.

When a work consists of more than one volume the number should be stated.

If there are works in foreign languages in the catalogue let their titles be revised by some one acquainted with those languages. Otherwise, judging from examples which have been seen, there will be many mistakes, which may subject the catalogue to ridicule.

The printers' proof should be read with care, and returned, if not perfect, two or three times to the office for corrections. The type chosen should be distinct,—what

* Æneid, Lib. iii, 658.

is called by printers *Bourgeois* or *Brevier*, using in the notes *Minion* for the former and *Nonpareil* for the latter. Avoid smaller fonts, as trying to the eye.

How far it may be possible to introduce a classed system into the catalogue must be left to each library to decide. Independent lists of Fiction, Juvenile books, Drama, and Biography will be found helpful to the reader. In such cases it is not necessary, as is sometimes done, to repeat both the author and the title when they have already appeared in the general alphabet.

It will be seen from what has been said that catalogues of town libraries can be made more economical. They can be made more useful by an equal expenditure of money in other ways.

Catalogues are regarded as the most dreary, as well as the most perplexing reading, by many persons, who often prefer to go without books rather than to take the trouble to hunt for their titles. What can be done to overcome this prejudice? Only this: to make them so simple that they are understood without vexatious study, so thorough that they give in the best form all the information possible, and so attractive that no one can help sharing the librarian's pleasure in them. How few titles there are which do not need some explanation to make their scope or their meaning evident? A writer in a recent number of the *Spectator** having taken up a book entitled "Sketches from shady places," expecting to be transported to the wooded retreats of the country, only to find that the shady places are dens of vice, is led to suggest that books had better be published without titles, since a title is no longer any guide to their subject or object, and that the name only of the author be given, with the number in the series by that author, as, for instance, John Smith's novels, No. 10. With a word or two of explanation, all such titles as "Juventus mundi," "Aftermath," "The gates ajar," "Sesame and lilies," "The construction of sheepfolds," "Battle of Dorking," and the like, are made clear. A few words descriptive of an author, of his nationality, his profession or his views, may make a column of blind or deceptive titles intelligible, and the date of his birth will tell the reader whether the scientific work mentioned will give the information needed. If a novel, or book for the young, let this be stated, if it is not plain from the title; if suitable also for adults, let this be mentioned. If historical fiction, let the time and the country described be stated; if a history or book of travels, the dates of its beginning and its end. If in any department of knowledge there are any books whose superiority is unquestioned, let some sign be used calling attention to this fact, and, on the other hand, if there are indifferent or bad books in the library, let this be indicated. Let contents of books of a miscellaneous character be given, with references from every subject treated. Brief notes under a country will indicate its leading historical works, or sketch its literary or artistic history.

These are only a few of the many ways in which catalogues may be made more useful. Their value will be limited only by the knowledge of the librarian and the means placed at his disposal.

And now, having finished what I have to say on this subject, will you allow me to add a few words in regard to catalogues of larger libraries, and especially in respect to the Card Catalogue of the Boston Public Library. Not in its defense, however, for you will perhaps remember the story told of Antalcidas, that he interrupted a sage about to pronounce a defense of Hercules, with the question, "Who ever blamed him?"

Complaint against the catalogues of

* April 26, 1879.

large libraries is no new thing, and the suggestions for their improvement have been as numerous as the devices for perpetual motion. This fact is seen in the ponderous folios containing the Reports of the Commissioners on the British Museum, where are found the complaints, the conflicting opinions and the suggestions, partly wise and partly foolish, of English literary men. That these complaints are not louder and more frequent is a wonder to those who are familiar with catalogues and recognize the difficulties which lie in the way of their perfection.

I have lately read Señor Quesada's account of the libraries of Europe,* and, from his statements, supported as they are by those of others, am led to believe that in no library of an equally large collection of books does the public have the use of a catalogue equal to the card catalogue of the Boston Public Library. In many European libraries there is a struggle to keep up simply an authors' catalogue, which is delayed months after the books are received, and which is reserved often only for the use of its officials. In the Boston Public Library and its Branches there are eleven card catalogues, and an additional consolidated catalogue, where one card serves for several branch libraries. The eleven are arranged both under author, subject and title, and all are kept up promptly, with only the delay of a few hours or days after the books are received. And this in a collection of 365,000 volumes, with a yearly increase averaging for the past ten years 21,000 volumes, or 36,500 volumes and pamphlets. In the Bates Hall Public and Official Card Catalogues, there are at a low estimate 600,000 cards, the average annual addition for the past eight years being 69,000 cards. The Public Card Catalogue consists of the cards prepared since October, 1871, together with all the titles of books received previous to that time, which have been cut from 35 catalogues and bulletins and added to the collection. This work, done by a great number of persons from Mr. Jewett's time to the present, each of whom has had his own plans for improving the catalogue,—plans which the increase of the library absolutely demanded,—has made the task of harmonizing the various catalogues to make one symmetrical whole an exceedingly difficult one. As the library increased, its methods constantly broadened, the system of ten years ago being insufficient for the needs of to-day. For instance, the sixteen divisions and few hundred cards under the heading United States in the first printed catalogue, have increased to some 175 divisions and 8300 cards.

The work done to consolidate this vast mass of cards, and reduce it to a system as clear and as helpful as possible, has been a laborious one. It would be impossible to describe here its magnitude. To make the catalogue a perfect, ideal work, much remains to be done, and this must be in the same general direction as in the recent past. The dictionary system upon which the catalogue was founded should still be carried out, but in a more perfect state than has hitherto been attempted. Whatever can be found outside of this system which will remedy its defects should be adopted. If it be possible, as was proposed by the author of the essay read here two days ago, to marry the classed and dictionary systems so long kept asunder, I shall be the last to forbid the bans. Mr. Cutter states, however, in the Special Report of the Bureau of Education (p. 543), that to add to the present dictionary system of the Boston Public Library a classed system would probably not perceptibly increase the practical value of the catalogue. Without yielding un-

* Las bibliotecas europeas y algunas de la América latina, por Vicente G. Quesada. Tomo 1. Buenos Aires, 1877.

qualified assent to this statement, I cannot go to the other extreme, and believe with the essayist that his scheme will supply all the defects of a dictionary catalogue, inasmuch as all catalogues compiled after such schemes are very imperfect, and less helpful than dictionary catalogues. These defects are to be remedied in numberless ways, of which the plan proposed by him is only one.

A "COMBINED" CHARGING SYSTEM.*

BY J. SCHWARTZ, LIBRARIAN NEW YORK APPRENTICES' LIBRARY.

AMONG the many problems in library economy that have to be solved in a circulating library, there are none of more vital moment than the proper method of charging its loans. While the clientage is small and the circulation correspondingly meagre, the problem does not give any serious inconvenience, and an ordinary ledger or borrower's account answers well enough, but when the daily loans run up into the hundreds, not to say thousands, it becomes a serious question how to secure the maximum of results with the minimum of labor.

I will not take up your time with a detailed explanation of the various systems of charging that have been suggested by the ingenuity or experience of librarians, as this part of my subject has been very ably handled in a series of articles in the third volume of the LIBRARY JOURNAL (Nos. 6–8 and 10); I will only say, as necessary to my purpose, that all the plans there explained are built up from one or more of the following typical and fundamental systems:

1. The account with the Borrower.
2. The account with the Book.
3. The account with Time.

A perfect system, suited to the needs of our larger libraries, should embody and combine all these elements, as each is alike important and necessary. Such a plan is still a desideratum, and I therefore submit, with great diffidence, the following scheme, which aims to supply that want. While I cannot hope that I have entirely solved the problem, I believe I have made a nearer approach to its solution than any plan with which I am acquainted.

I begin my explanation by assuming that the books are classified and numbered. Whether a relative or absolute scheme of notation is used, or whether the classes are designated by letters or figures is immaterial, but for the sake of illustration I will suppose that letters are used for the main divisions, and that the accessions number is entered in each volume.

The materials or machinery I propose using are simply—1, the Borrower's card; 2, the Book slip, and 3, some boxes to contain the cards. The Borrower's card (of the P. O. size) is to contain the signature number, name and address of the reader, and spaces for date of issue, class letter and accessions number, date of return, and fines paid and due.

The Book slip (also of P. size) is to have its top edge gummed, and is to be ruled with spaces for date of issue and reader's number. One of these slips is to be attached to every book issued, and is to receive an entry whenever the book is given out. When filled it is to be removed, and another slip put in its place.

The boxes are intended as receptacles

* Read by C. A. Cutter.

of the cards and are to be divided into suitable fixed partitions. Besides these, a number of movable board or zinc partitions are to be provided to separate the classes. If there are separate counters for the two sexes, four boxes will be needed, one at each charging desk and one at each return counter; where no separation is deemed necessary, two boxes will be sufficient.

When a book is given out, the attendant pencils on one of the gummed slips, which is to be attached to the fly leaf, the reader's number and date of issue, and places the reader's card in the book, and hands both to the charging clerk, who stamps the date of issue on the card, and enters the class letter and accessions number of the book taken out, which is then handed to the reader. The card is deposited in the charging box in the order of its class and accessions number, in its proper division, and as the same process occurs as each successive book is issued, the box will contain, at the end of each day, all the loans in a classified form, so that the necessary statistics can be at once obtained and recorded; the cards are then removed to the return-box.

It is usually customary to keep the issues of each day separate, to facilitate the ascertaining of books overdue. But this is objectionable, as the search for any book out may require from fourteen to thirty-one references before it can be known who has it. The end aimed at is attained in a much simpler and more direct way, as will be presently shown, by separating only the issues of *each week*, and beginning a new series every seventh day. The issues of the five succeeding days are therefore to be distributed among those of the first day, the whole forming one series.

As the return boxes contain a card for every book *out*, and as the books themselves have a record of the date when issued, together with the number of the reader's card, it is only necessary that the attendant refer to the slip and accessions number of the book returned to find the corresponding card. If another book is taken out, the borrower's number and date of issue are pencilled on the book slip, and the card and slip are then handed to the charging clerk, who proceeds as shown above, this time in addition stamping the date of return. As no card can be found except by means of the book charged on it, the mere fact of having the card before him is proof of the return of the previous book.

As the cards of each week are kept separate, and as every book returned requires a card to be withdrawn from its respective week, the number of finable books can be easily ascertained. Assuming, for the sake of illustration, that *two* weeks is the limit allowed, the cards of the third week preceding the current one are of course delinquent, and as their number has been diminished by the withdrawal of the cards of books returned, those remaining will probably not average over one hundred and eighty in a circulation of 150,000 volumes per annum. These one hundred and eighty cards are to be distributed into six heaps, according to the respective days in the week,—an operation that will not require half an hour's work, —and all the delinquents of that week will be in regular order, so that the necessary notices can be sent each day to those a week overdue.

As the books *out* show where the cards of the live accounts are, no index is required except for *dead* accounts, and this is easily obtained by placing the borrower's cards in the alphabetical order of their names in a drawer for that purpose.

When accounts are opened for a specific period it is customary to keep an expiration book, but this labor can be dispensed with by using, for accounts expiring *during* the current year or season, colored cards,

Boston Public Library
Central Library, Copley Square

Division of
Reference and Research Services

The Date Due Card in the pocket indicates the date on or before which this book should be returned to the Library.

Please do not remove cards from this pocket.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 06626 773 1

SHELF No. .....

[April, 1879, 10,000]

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